

## **LEARNING EFFICACY BETWEEN RELIGIOUS AND PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY**

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### **Abstract**

Learning efficacy functions to increase the desire of learning through mediations of motivations and confidence. This present study was designed to investigate two main objectives. First, it examines the level of learning efficacy among selected secondary students. Second, it explores whether there is a statistically significant difference in the level of learning efficacy between public and religious school students. A total of 242 students (121 from public and 121 from religious school) sampled from four schools in Johor participated in the survey, employing a 12-item questionnaire measuring Learning Self-efficacy (LSE) and Peer Self-efficacy (PSE). The items were pilot-tested before being administered to the respondents. The data was analyzed quantitatively using descriptive statistics and independent-samples t-tests. The result showed that the majority of students experience a moderate level of self-efficacy. Generally, for the selected public school students the mean is 2.75 and religious school students the mean is 2.97. Regarding the comparison level of learning efficacy between the two types of students, the findings of the current study show that there are no significant differences, while peers self-efficacy revealed that there are no significant differences.

**Keywords:** *learning efficacy, public school, religious school.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Malaysian Education System offers a number of options for Malaysians to obtain a complete education so as to become holistic citizens. Due to the diversity of races, religions, and beliefs, the Malaysian Education System has become unique and different from other countries' education system. According to the Pusat Maklumat Rakyat, Jabatan Penerangan (2013), there are many types of schools offered in Malaysia, including the National Type schools, Cluster schools, Vernacular schools, Mara Junior Science College or better known as *Maktab Rendah Sains Mara* (MRSM), Technical schools, Integrated Full Boarding schools or *Sekolah Berasrama Penuh Integrasi* (SBPI), as well as religious schools. Even though there are many types of schools in Malaysia, the National Curriculum is still being implemented as a standard guideline for all schools. Therefore, regardless the type of school the students are attending, they are required to sit for the national standardised examinations such as the Lower Secondary Assessments or *Penilaian Menengah Rendah* (PMR) and the Malaysian Education Certificate or *Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia* (SPM).

Although the schools in Malaysia are supposed to implement the same national curriculum, in reality the environment is different. This is because different type of school has different identity. For example, MRSM is opened to Bumiputera students and there is an allocation of 10% for non-Bumiputera students who are studying at national schools in Peninsular Malaysia to study in the college (Portal Rasmi Majlis Amanah Rakyat, 2013). Cluster schools, on the other hand, are outstanding schools with excellent management and student performance. The development of cluster schools is aimed at improving school performance as well as to develop exemplary schools in the same cluster similar to other schools outside the cluster (Pusat Maklumat Rakyat, Jabatan Penerangan 2013). Islamic full boarding schools (SBPI) are full residential schools specifically catered for students who have achieved excellent results in their national examinations as well as in their co- curriculum activities. These schools are also developed to provide opportunities for excellent students from the rural areas to pursue their studies in science and at the same time to increase the number of Bumiputera students in various professional fields (Salim, 2011). Hence, there is variety in Malaysian schools' identity.

Diversity in schools creates different environment for students' learning development. The physical and psychological structure of the school can affect students' behaviour and attitude, which are developed by what the students see, view, and experience at school. Thus, it is the school environment that influences the psychology of the students (Appleton, Christenson, & Furlong, 2008; Goodman & Gregg, 2010; Midley, Roeser, & Urdan, 1996; Sylva, 1994). Apart from the students' psychological aspect, another aspect that can be easily influenced by the school environment is self-efficacy. This viewpoint is supported by Adeyemo (n.d.), Mori & Uchida (2012), and Schunk (2005). They report that school environment has a significant influence on students' self-efficacy.

### **Objectives of the study**

Generally, the purpose of this study is to determine the level of learning efficacy among secondary school students.

Specifically this study is going to:

1. To examine the level of learning efficacy possessed by public and religious secondary school students.
2. To examine the differences level of learning efficacy between public and religious secondary school students.

### **Research questions**

1. What is the level of learning efficacy possessed by secondary students in public and religious school?
2. Is there any significant difference in levels of learning efficacy between public and religious secondary school students?

## METHODOLOGY

In this study, the researcher will use a quantitative research design. In order to collect data, the questionnaire, consisting of the informed consent letter, demographic background of participants, Learning Self-efficacy (LSE) and Peer Self-Efficacy (PSE) will be distributed to all population. From the total population from four public and religious school, the researcher will use a systematic random sampling to obtain 242 samples. The data obtained, will be analysed using the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social; Sciences) software. In analysing the data, the researcher will use descriptive statistic and Independent t-test.

## FINDINGS

242 students were sampled and they were purposely selected from form two and form four students to respond to the self-efficacy questionnaire. The respondents were chosen from four public and religious secondary schools in Muar, Johor. Out of the 242 students, 121 students (50%) were public school students and another 121 students (50%) were religious school students. 122 (50.4%) of the 242 students were form two students and the other 120 (49.6%) were form four students. In terms of their gender, the average (50%, n=121) was same between male and female students. The demographic characteristics of students are presented in Table 1.

Table 1  
Demographic Characteristic of Students

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Type of School</b>		
Public	121	50%
Religious	121	50%
<b>Level of Study</b>		
Lower level	122	50.4%
Upper level	120	49.6%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	121	50%
Female	121	50%

### Section two: level of self-efficacy

The information presented in this section provides answers to the first and second research questions, which are “What is the level of self-efficacy possessed by secondary students in public school?” and “What is the level of self-efficacy possessed by secondary students in religious school?”, respectively. To find out the level of self-efficacy among public and religious secondary school students, the respondents were asked to answer all the 12 items in the

questionnaire. Results in Table 2 describe the level of students' self-efficacy to answer the first research question of the research.

Table 2  
Level of Self-Efficacy among Secondary School Students

Level of Self-Efficacy	N	%
Low	4	1.7%
Intermediate	173	71.4%
High	65	26.9%
n	242	

As shown in Table 2, only 26.9% (n=65) of the respondents had a high level of self-efficacy. Majority of the respondents were in the intermediate level with 71.4% (n=173), while the rest of the students had low level of self-efficacy with 1.7% (n= 4).

Table 3  
Level of Self-Efficacy among Public School Students

Level of Self-Efficacy	n	%
Low	4	3.3%
Intermediate	84	69.4%
High	33	27.2%
N	121	

Next, the level of self-efficacy among public school students is shown in Table 3 and the findings showed that 27.2% (n=33) of the respondents were at the high level, while 3.3% (n=4) of the respondents were at the low level. The highest score was at the intermediate level with 69.4% (n=84).

Table 4  
Levels of Self-Efficacy among Religious School Students

Level of Self-Efficacy	n	%
Low	0	0 %
Intermediate	69	57%
High	52	43 %
n	121	

Table 4 reveals the level of self-efficacy among religious school students. From the analysis, the percentage of students with high level of self-efficacy is 43% (n=52), while most of the students were at the intermediate level 57% (n=69). None of the students indicated low level of self-efficacy.

Table 5  
Mean Value of Self-Efficacy Level for Public and Religious School Students

Types of School	N	Mean
Public School	121	2.75
Religious School	121	2.97

Table 5 reveals that the average mean score of the students from the two types of schools. Students from public schools showed a mean score of 2.75, which is slightly lower when compared to the 2.97 mean score obtained by religious school students.

Table 6  
*t*-test on Mean Scores for Learning Self-efficacy (LSE) for Public and Religious School Students

Type of School	n	Mean	SD	P
Public School	121	2.70	0.49	.47
Religious School	121	2.76	0.54	

\*Significant at the 0.05 alpha level

From the descriptive analysis conducted, the results showed that the mean score for public school students was 2.70 (SD=0.49) and the mean score of the religious school students was 2.76

(SD=0.55). The mean difference between the two types of school was .06. The p-value of .47 showed that the probability was greater than the alpha level of 0.05, thus the result was not statistically significant. The result failed to reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, there was no significant difference in the level of LSE between public and religious school students. The result suggested that the type of school influenced the students' learning self-efficacy level.

Table 7  
t-test on Mean Scores for Peer Self-Efficacy (PSE) for Public and Religious School Students

Type of School	n	Mean	SD	P
Public School	121	2.92	0.51	.001
Religious School	121	3.21	0.56	

\*Significant at the 0.05 alpha level

Table 7 shows the mean scores for PSE for public and religious school students. The mean score for public school students was 2.92 (SD=0.51) while the mean score for religious school students was 3.21 (SD=0.56). The mean difference between the two types of school was 0.001. The p-value of .001 showed that probability was lower than the alpha level of 0.05, thus the results showed that it was statistically significant. The result rejected the null hypothesis. It can be concluded that there was a significant difference in the level of PSE between public and religious school students. The result suggested that the type of school influenced the students' peer self-efficacy level.

## CONCLUSIONS

The result showed that the majority of students experience a moderate level of self-efficacy. Generally, for the selected public school students the mean is 2.75 and religious school students the mean is 2.97. Regarding the comparison level of learning efficacy between the two types of students, the findings of the current study show that there are no significant differences, while peers self-efficacy revealed that there are no significant differences.

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